



4333-15

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Fish and Wildlife Service

[FWS-HQ-ES-2018-N020; MO# 300030113; OMB Control Number 1018-0119]

Agency Information Collection Activities; Policy for Evaluation of Conservation Efforts When Making Listing Decisions (PECE)

AGENCY: Fish and Wildlife Service, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of Information Collection; request for comment.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, we, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) are proposing to revise an existing information collection.

DATES: Interested persons are invited to submit comments on or before [INSERT DATE 60 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE *FEDERAL REGISTER*].

ADDRESSES: Send your comments on the information collection request (ICR) by mail to the Service Information Collection Clearance Officer, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, MS: BPHC, 5275 Leesburg Pike, Falls Church, VA 22041-3803 (mail); or by email to Info_Coll@fws.gov. Please reference OMB Control Number 1018-0119 in the subject line of your comments.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: To request additional information about this ICR, contact Madonna L. Baucum, Service Information Collection Clearance Officer, by email at Info_Coll@fws.gov, or by telephone at (703) 358-2503.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, we provide the general public and other Federal agencies with an opportunity to comment on new, proposed, revised, and continuing collections of information. This helps us assess the impact of our information collection requirements and minimize the public's reporting burden. It also helps the public understand our information collection requirements and provide the requested data in the desired format.

We are soliciting comments on the proposed ICR that is described below. We are especially interested in public comment addressing the following issues: (1) is the collection necessary to the proper functions of the Service; (2) will this information be processed and used in a timely manner; (3) is the estimate of burden accurate; (4) how might the Service enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (5) how might the Service minimize the burden of this collection on the respondents, including through the use of information technology.

Comments that you submit in response to this notice are a matter of public record. We will include or summarize each comment in our request to OMB to approve this ICR. Before including your address, phone number, email address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, you should be aware that your entire comment—including your personal identifying information—may be made publicly available at any time. While you can ask us in your comment to withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

Abstract: Section 4 of the Endangered Species Act (ESA) (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.) outlines the process by which we can list species as a threatened species or an endangered species. When we consider whether or not to list a species, the ESA requires us to take into account the efforts being made by any State or any political subdivision of a State to protect such species. We also take into account the efforts being made by other entities. States or other entities often formalize conservation efforts in conservation agreements, conservation plans, management plans, or similar documents. The conservation efforts recommended or described in such documents could prevent some species from becoming so imperiled that they meet the definition of a threatened species or an endangered species under the ESA.

The Policy for Evaluation of Conservation Efforts When Making Listing Decisions (PECE) (68 FR 15100, March 28, 2003) encourages the development of conservation agreements or plans and provides certainty about the standard that an individual conservation effort must meet in order for us to consider whether it is likely to make a difference in a species' status. PECE applies to "formalized conservation efforts" that have not been implemented or have been implemented but have not yet demonstrated if they are effective at the time of a listing decision.

Under PECE, formalized conservation efforts are defined as conservation efforts (specific actions, activities, or programs designed to eliminate or reduce threats or otherwise improve the status of a species) identified in a conservation agreement, conservation plan, management plan, or similar document. To assist

us in evaluating a formalized conservation effort under PECE, we collect information such as conservation plans, monitoring results, and progress reports. The development of any agreement or plan is voluntary. There is no requirement that the individual conservation efforts included in such documents be designed to meet the standard in PECE. The PECE policy is posted on our Candidate Conservation Web site at <http://www.fws.gov/endangered/esa-library/pdf/PECE-final.pdf>.

Title of Collection: Policy for Evaluation of Conservation Efforts When Making Listing Decisions (PECE).

OMB Control Number: 1018-0119.

Form Number: None.

Type of Review: Revision of a currently approved collection.

Respondents/Affected Public: Primarily State, local, or Tribal governments. However, individuals, businesses, and not-for-profit organizations could develop agreements/plans or may agree to implement certain conservation efforts identified in a State agreement or plan.

Respondent's Obligation: Required to Obtain or Retain a Benefit.

Frequency of Collection: On occasion.

Total Estimated Annual Nonhour Burden Cost: None.

Activity	Estimated Number of Annual Respondents	Average Number of Submissions Each	Estimated Number of Annual Responses	Completion Time per Response (Hours)	Estimated Annual Burden Hours
PECE - Reporting					
Individuals	1	1	1	120	120
Private Sector	1	1	1	120	120
Government	7	1	7	120	840
PECE - Monitoring					
Individuals	1	1	1	600	600

Private Sector	1	1	1	600	600
Government	7	1	7	600	4,200
PECE - Development of Conservation Plan/Agreement (One-time Burden)					
Individuals	1	1	1	2,000	2,000
Private Sector	1	1	1	2,000	2,000
Government	1	1	1	2,000	2,000
TOTALS:	21		21		12,480

An agency may not conduct or sponsor and a person is not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

The authority for this action is the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. 3501 *et seq.*).

Dated: February 23, 2018.

Madonna L. Baucum,
Information Collection Clearance Officer, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.
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